

VZCZCXRO8772
PP RUEHAG RUEHROV
DE RUEHMD #1035 1491349
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 291349Z MAY 07
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2648
INFO RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHDM/AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY 0331
RUEHLA/AMCONSUL BARCELONA PRIORITY 2755

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 001035

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

NEA/ELA FOR S. SITA SONTY
NEA/PI FOR KENT PATTON
DRL/NESCA FOR JOE BARGHOUT

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/25/2017
TAGS: [KDEM](#) [PREL](#) [SY](#) [SP](#)
SUBJECT: SPAIN ON SYRIA REFERENDUM

REF: STATE 71071

Classified By: DCM Hugo Llorens; reasons 1.4 (B) and (D)

11. (C) Poloff contacted MFA Subdirector General for the Middle East Alberto Ucelay on 5/25 to relay reftel points, urging Ucelay to issue a statement calling attention to Syria's sham May 27 Presidential Referendum. Ucelay, who had returned that day from Lebanon, acknowledged that Spain did not view the referendum as a democratic process, but said Spain did not intend to issue a statement. Ucelay was uncertain as to whether the EU would issue a statement, but noted that in most cases, Spain would not issue an independent declaration if an EU statement was being contemplated.

//COMMENT//

12. (C) Spain has taken the lead within the EU to ease Syria's isolation, so it is not surprising that Madrid would not take a forward-leaning position on this issue. Spanish officials do not view the Syrian opposition as representing a significant force for change in Damascus and therefore favor engaging and developing relationships with the current leadership, particularly those they view as more open to reforms (notably the Foreign Minister and the Communications Minister).
AGUIRRE